



ASHWELL RURAL DISTRICT.

Annual Report for 1923

by the

Medical Officer of Health.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The following is a summary of the health conditions prevailing in the District during the last year :—

General Statistics.

Area, 22,049 acres.

Population (1923), 3,576.

Number of inhabited houses, 994.

Number of families or separate occupiers (1921), 996.

Rateable Value, £24,608.

Sum represented by a penny rate, £62.

Vital Statistics.

There were 59 births, 41 deaths, and 6 deaths of children under one year. Two illegitimate children died soon after birth.

The rates calculated from these figures as compared with the general rates were as follows :—

	Ashwell R.D.	England & Wales.
Birth-rate..... per 1,000 living	16.5	19.7
Death-rate	11.4	11.6
Infant Mortality .., births	100.6	69

From these figures it will be seen that the birth-rate is low, the death-rate is average, and the infant mortality is too high. There were 4 illegitimate births, 2 boys and 2 girls.

There were no deaths from scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough, diphtheria, or infantile diarrhoea. There was 1 death from influenza, 3 from pulmonary tuberculosis, 10 from malignant disease, 8 from disease of the cardiovascular system, 9 from the lung diseases apart from tuberculosis, and 10 from other causes.

Infectious Disease.

The notifications included 5 cases of scarlet fever, 1 case of puerperal fever, and 1 of erysipelas. This gives an attack-rate of 1.39 per 1,000 for scarlet fever, .28 for puerperal fever and erysipelas. Chicken-pox and measles have also been notifiable in this District, and this has proved useful. At Ashwell however measles became epidemic, and cases of chicken-pox, scarlet-fever and mumps occurred at the same time. All these cases were kept as closely under supervision as possible, and no deaths occurred. The scarlet fever cases were promptly sent to the Hospital at Royston, but it was found impossible to isolate the other infections properly in their homes, owing to the lack of bedroom accommodation in the houses and the comparative scarcity of houses to the population. There is no doubt that more houses are needed in Ashwell.

Apart from this epidemic of measles the year was healthy and no special diseases occurred.

School Inspections.

The children examined at school were those born in 1911, 1915, and all who had just entered the schools.

134 children were examined, and the following defects were found :—

Unclean.	Malnutrition.	Bad. Teeth.	Enlarged Tonsils.	Heart Abnormality.	Defective Eyesight.	Skin Disease.
14	4	67	64	4	10	2

56 children were found to be unvaccinated.

A real attempt is now made to get the defects found remedied, and this can generally be done by the Clinics promoted by the County Council.

Sanitary Administration.

The Sanitary Inspector has thoroughly carried out his duties during the year, as will be seen by the report of his work.

I remain, your obedient servant,

NORMAN MACFADYEN,
M.B., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health.

Summary.

Visits and Inspection of Cottages	...	...	...	802
Visits to Infectious Cases	...	...	...	84
„ Dirty Houses	...	...	...	2
„ Cases of Overcrowding	...	...	...	3
„ Water Supplies	...	...	...	95
„ Privies, &c.	...	...	...	154
„ Animals	...	...	...	6
„ Ditches, Drains, and Cesspools...	...	...	...	65
„ Cowsheds, Dairies, and Slaughter-houses	...	...	...	80
„ Schools	...	...	...	5
„ Bakehouses, Outworkers, and Workshops	...	...	...	35
„ Petrol and Carbide Stores	...	...	...	16
				1347
Number of Nuisances discovered	...	...	...	198
„ Notices served	{ Preliminary	...	...	179
„ Nuisances Abated		Statutory	...	19
„ Nuisances Abated	...	...	...	180
Dairies and Cowsheds	No. on Register	25	Inspections	58
Slaughter-houses	...	9	„	22
Bakehouses	...	7	„	17

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, etc.

Number on Register	...	...	...	40
Nuisances Discovered	11	Remedied	...	10
Number of Premises Disinfected	...	...	...	15
Number of Water Certificates issued	...	...	...	7
Samples of Water taken	...	...	...	4

All found to be unfit.

Housing.

Number of New Houses erected during the year ...	24
As part of the Council Housing Scheme ...	16

UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES. INSPECTION.

Total number of Dwelling Houses inspected ...	256
No. of Houses inspected and recorded under Housing and Town Planning Regulations of 1910 ...	102
No. of Houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	7
No. of Houses (exclusive of the above) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation...	70
No. of defective Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	53

PROCEEDINGS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

No. of Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	8
No. of Houses in which defects were remedied—	
(a) By Owner ...	53
(b) By Local Authority ...	nil

PROCEEDINGS UNDER HOUSING ACTS ... nil

Water Supply.

A reliable and adequate supply of water will very shortly be available at Hinxworth. On opening up the existing public well it was found to be unsatisfactory, and it was decided to have a new well bored in a more central position of the village. The work on this well has been started and will be finished in the next 3 or 4 weeks.

Housing.

When inspecting under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, I have met with several cases of overcrowding, and houses, which, if others were available, should be closed, pointing to the fact that houses are required in the district, particularly in Ashwell.

Your obedient servant,

ALLEN C. DYSON,
Sanitary Inspector.